

Date: December 18, 2007

Memorandum

MIAMI-DADE
COUNTY

To: Honorable Chairman Bruno A. Barreiro
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

Agenda Item No. 12(B)4

From: George M. Burgess
County Manager

Subject: Violence Intervention Project

In September, 2006 through the initiative of Vice-Chairwoman Barbara J. Jordan, the Board of County Commissioners recommended the allocation of \$1 million in the FY 2006-07 Budget for staff to develop a community wide intervention and prevention program to address the devastating youth violence that was permeating neighborhoods and communities throughout the County. The intent of this action was that the award would serve as a complement to the \$3 million in funding allocated by The Children's Trust to address youth violence. Upon approval of the recommendation, the monies were placed in reserve pending Board approval of an action plan for utilization of the funds. Following the budget meeting County staff with input from Vice Chairwoman Barbara J. Jordan, worked on the development of a plan. The following report outlines the preliminary plan developed for use of these funds.

The Violence Intervention Project (VIP), as it was originally named, will present a public outreach campaign aimed at effectively educating and motivating young people to adopt behavior changes to help reduce youth violence in Miami-Dade County. The foundation of the project is to increase awareness, encourage activism, and enhance access to services for both youth and their families. Working in coordination with existing programs, such as those funded by The Children's Trust, the VIP will foster the development and implementation of new intervention strategies designed to engage the entire community in reducing violence among our youth.

The VIP public outreach campaign will create opportunities for individuals, groups, and both public and private agencies to form partnerships to share responsibility for combating youth violence. It is the intent of the program to engage schools, businesses, individual community members and groups with young people in the community, in order to expose them to alternative choices and behaviors for dealing with conflict. These partnerships, forged through a shared understanding of the strategies and principles underlying the VIP, will draw on the diverse skills, talents and creative strategies of members of our community, in order to broaden the scope of efforts to reduce youth violence.

Recognizing the complexity of the issue, the fact that Miami-Dade County is unique in its global diverse environment and being mindful of the sense of pride that exists within each community, the success of the VIP will be contingent upon the ability to identify and relate to the targeted population; the development of messages and outreach activities that foster participation and motivate others to take action; and the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of successes throughout the campaign. The basic component of the program will be in pulling young people together as the primary motivators in combating violent activity in their respective schools and neighborhoods. The program will solicit the participation of youth, parents, community leaders, business owners, faith-based organizations, and popular local and national celebrities. The VIP represents a well planned, cost effective initiative designed to help stem the recent surge of violence that is impacting our future generations.

The **Awareness** strategy of the VIP is designed to provide community-wide public education on violence in Miami-Dade County, in conjunction with outreach activities focused on empowering youth to find alternatives to violent responses. All forms of media, particularly targeted youth related forms of

media, will be utilized to saturate the community with information about the VIP, how to join and the benefits of joining. It is the intent of the program to go anywhere in Miami-Dade County, but particular emphasis will be on areas with high incidences of youth violence, i.e., Carol City, Opa Locka, Miami Gardens, Overtown, Coconut Grove, Little Haiti, Goulds, Homestead and Florida City. In combination these areas accounted for over eighty percent (80%) of the firearm deaths to youth between 0-17 years of age from January 2003 to July 2006.

The campaign will focus on nine methods of delivery:

- **Events** – Promotional events, community events, cultural events
- **Radio** – Public service announcements, celebrity endorsements, program features
- **Print** – Feature stories, program highlights, advertisement
- **Television** – Feature stories, public service advertisement, success stories
- **Community** – Parent and youth dialogue groups, Youth pledge, mentoring, video
- **Promotional Incentives** – T-Shirts and other items that the community can use to "advertise" anti-violence and the campaign slogan. Youth contests
- **Internet** – Web Portal, Web Marketing, Web On-demand
- **Hotline** – Intranet marketing, internal education, internal campaign
- **Partnership** – Inter-departmental resource sharing, community partnerships, local and national networks

Each of these methods would implement a single brand message and image promoting a positive and powerful message regarding anti-violence and the purpose of the VIP.

The **Activism** component of the VIP is designed to engage teens and young adults in structured activities aimed at reducing violence and creating safe environments. At outreach events young adults will be asked to sign a pledge card volunteering to be a peace ambassador. These ambassadors will reach out to other youth, help educate professionals on the realities of violence and provide input on the development of strategies to illicit change. The intent is to bring together at-risk kids, kids involved in gangs and the so called "good" kids to learn from each other and seek methods on how to diffuse conflict before it escalates to violence. Through activism the young people will have an opportunity to let their voices be heard. T-shirts and giveaways, designed with youth to appeal to youth, will be a part of the activism component. The goal is to develop activities and promotional material that appeal to youth and actually motivate them to carry the message of anti-violence back to their peers.

The **Access** component proposes to provide teens and young adults with direct linkages that will aid in the redirection of negative behavior and attitudes. Through coordinated efforts with existing programs, the VIP will create linkages to services and implement new intervention strategies designed to engage the entire community in reducing violence among our youth

The VIP program will be housed in the Juvenile Services Department under the direction of a Project Administrator. To date, a number of preliminary activities have already occurred as a precursor to implementation of the formal campaign. A listing of the activities to date is included as Attachment I. Also included as Attachment II is a copy of the power point presentation that has been prepared for use during school and youth presentations.

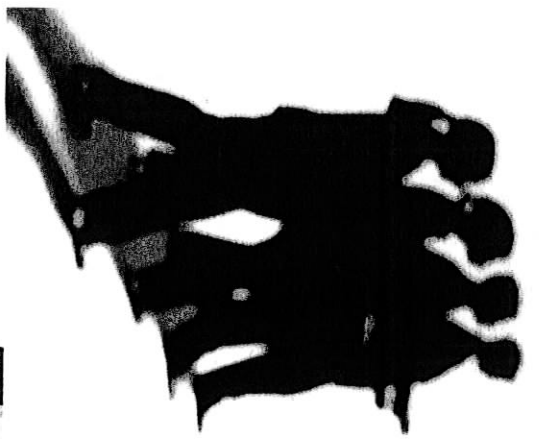

Special Assistant for Social Services

Preliminary Activities 6/07-10/07

1. June 2007, Countywide VIP kick-off rally in Bicentennial Park
2. Anti-Violence Pledges: signed pledges collected from youth encouraging support of VIP and anti-violent activities
 - a) 174 pledges collected during kick-off rally and other youth based activities since 6/07
 - b) Pledges separated by school/district. Will be used as initial basis for VIP district and regional organization of youth ambassadors
 - c) Additional pledges will be collected as program is organized and implemented
3. Initial promotional items marketing anti-violence received and distributed at youth oriented and school events
4. Youth town hall type events to be held in each of the targeted areas and marketed Countywide. The initial event has been planned and supported. The remaining 3 will follow in similar format within 60 days thereafter
 - a) Miami Gardens/Opa Locka/Carol City - 1/12/08
 - b) Homestead/Florida City/Naranja/Goulds/West Perrine
 - c) Overtown/Coconut Grove/Liberty City
 - d) Little Haiti/North Miami/North Miami Beach
5. Staff from the Juvenile Services Department (JSD) met with all middle and high school Miami-Dade Public School trust counselors to discuss strategies for implementation, support and input
6. JSD staff was asked to present at the following schools:
 - a) American High School

- b) Lamar Curry Middle School
 - c) 500 Role Models Academy
 - d) Killian High School
7. JSD staff has made presentations to the following organizations by invitation and/or participation on task forces and committees:
- a) Miami Coalition
 - b) Miami Gardens Youth Council
 - c) Miami Beach Drug and Alcohol Prevention Task Force
 - d) Miami Weed and Seed
 - e) Embrace Girls Foundation
 - f) Girl Power Parent Academy
 - g) Opa-Locka Police Youth Academy
 - h) Miami Shores Rotary Club
 - i) Miami Law Enforcement Task Force
 - j) Miami Rivers of Life
 - k) Community Empowerment Team (Liberty City)
8. JSD staff participated at the following County, community or privately sponsored family/child events to promote the VIP Initiative:
- a) Homestead Day - Homestead
 - b) Car and Bike Show - Hialeah
 - c) University of Miami: "Kids Who Got Shot" town hall meeting
 - d) Week Without Violence - Miami Gardens
 - e) Zo's Summer Groove
9. JSD staff coordinated with Miami-Dade Communications Department to plan a Countywide media campaign strategy
10. County staff participated in the following conferences promoting violence prevention strategies and juvenile justice issues:
- a. Gang Re-entry Summit
 - b. Youth Gang Summit

- c. Community Youth Violence Summit
 - d. Non-Violence Blueprint Commission
 - e. Values Change for a Non-Violent Community
 - f. Silence the Violence
- 11. Design and completion of initial service brochure
- 12. Design and completion of portable display board to be used for indoor and outdoor display tables at events.
- 13. Design and completion of youth oriented power point presentation to be used at school and community presentations
- 14. Meetings and discussions with local talent regarding participation in events and support of the VIP program.
- 15. Meeting by invitation with Weed and Seed to discuss collaboration on memorial wall project.
 - a. Staff will assist with locating a place to erect
 - b. Unveiling ceremony will be used as a Countywide anti-violence event that will do the following:
 - 1. acknowledge the issue of violence
 - 2. acknowledge the 500 plus children who have died by gunfire in Miami-Dade County since 1980
 - 3. acknowledge their families
 - 4. acknowledge proactive strategies of the VIP in combating violence
 - 5. provide a Countywide forum that will center around the VIP and the County's efforts to reduce violence



UNITE

Against Violence

- Unified

- Non-violent

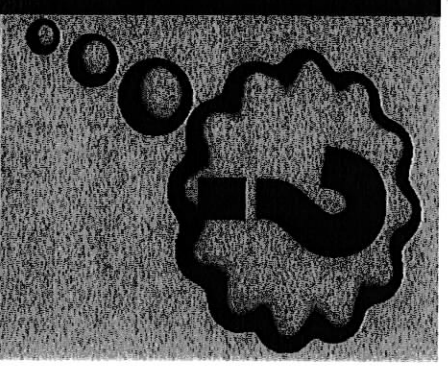
- Youth

- Teaching

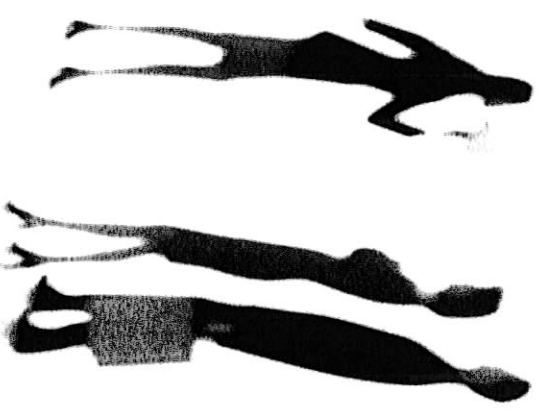
- Empowerment

WHAT IS IT?




- Violence Intervention Project
- Vision of Commissioner Barbara Jordan
- Youth Driven
- Adult Supported
- Public Outreach Campaign



Vision of Commissioner
Barbara Jordan



CTS

-  About 1 out of 8 people murdered in the US each year is younger than 18 years old
-  Almost 16 million youth have witnessed some sort of violent assault
-  Youth crime is down but murders are up



R.I.P.
11/11/11

THE GOAL

- To let Miami-Dade youth from all backgrounds become leaders and educators in the struggle to save our children and young people from the violence that is devastating their neighborhoods, schools, and life-styles.

LEAD TO SUCCEED



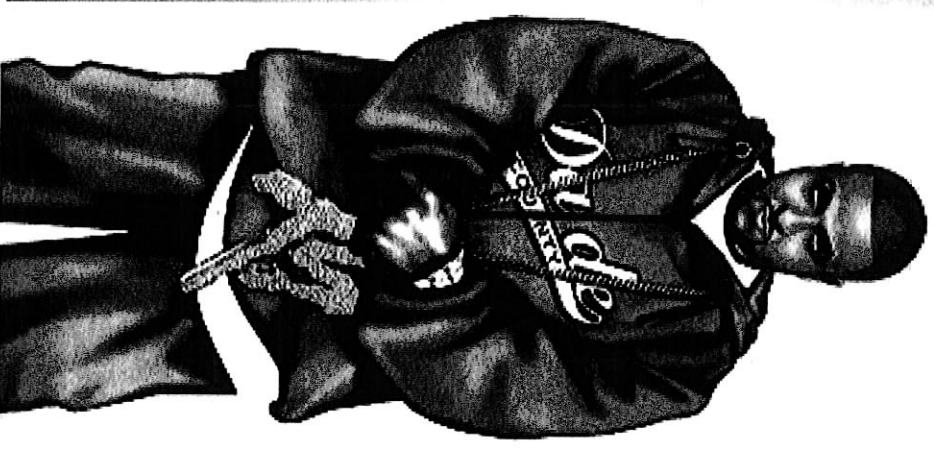
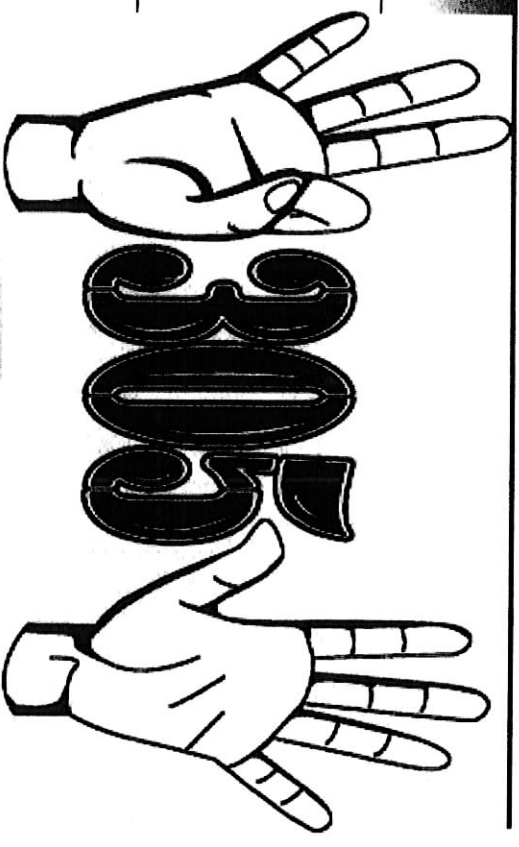
WHERE?

- Miami-Dade County

- Your Hometown

- Why There?

- Because violence affects everyone
- Because it's where you, your friends, and your families live

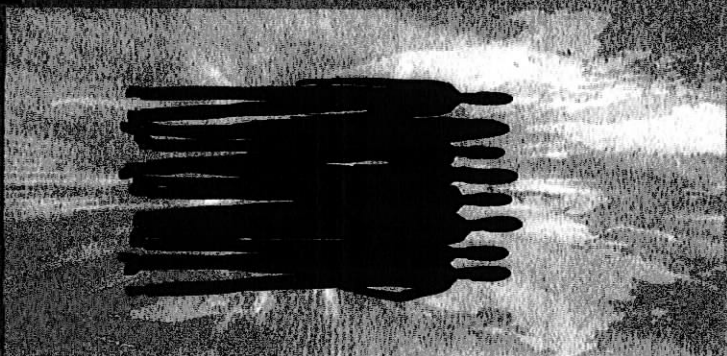


Who Can Make A Change?

- ❖ **Y O Uth in school**
- ❖ **Y O Uth in gangs**
- ❖ **Y O Uth at risk**
- ❖ **Y O Uth who want to be leaders**
- ❖ **Y O Uth who want safe neighborhoods**
- ❖ **Y O Uth who want safe schools**
- ❖ **Y O Uth who want to laugh,**

hang out, and grow up with their friends

—**MORRIS**



Why Focus on the Youth?

Because.....

- They are ready for a change
- They know the problems
- Their message is honest and simple
- They learn from each other
- They can be the first line of defense
- They can get to the root cause of the violence
- They are VIPs !!!!!

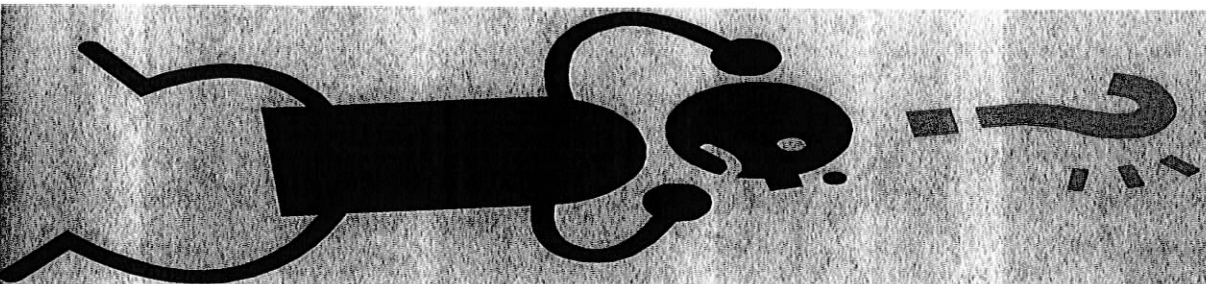
The Takeover

- Become Peace Ambassadors
- Educate youth and adults
- Talk It Out
- Offer solutions
- Let Young Voices Be Heard
- Be a Leader
- Spread the Message
- Tell adults how they can help
- Create a story worth reporting
- Make a difference

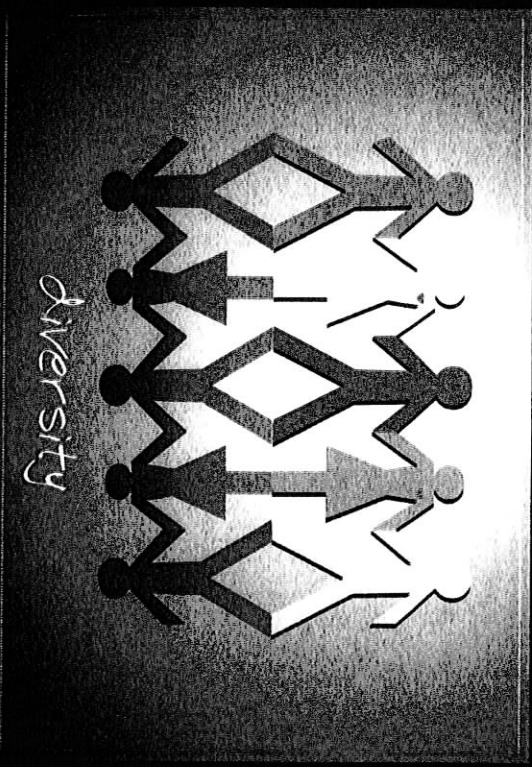


Ask Yourself

- What do you want for you, your friends, and families?
- Who has the power to help you?
- What do you want them to hear?
- Who can make them listen the



UNITE



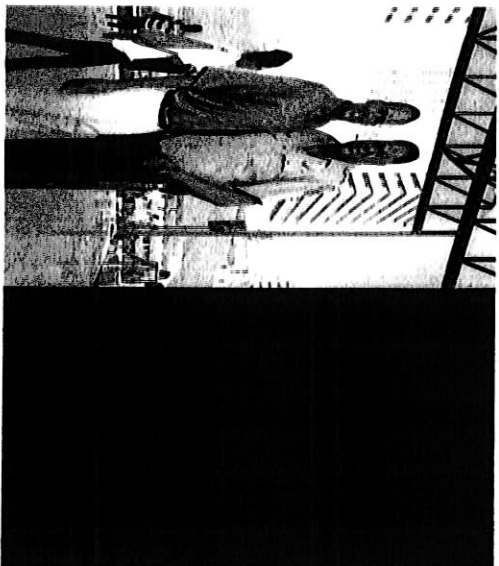
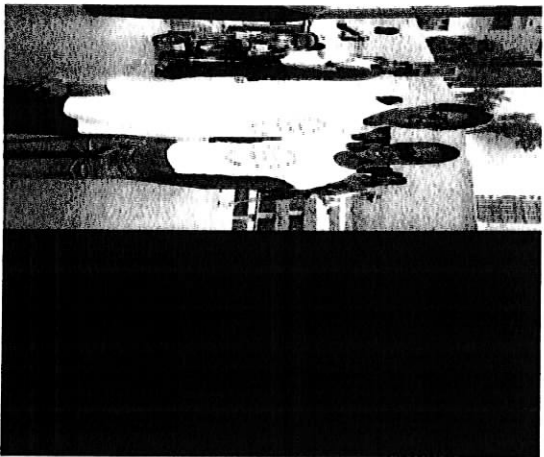
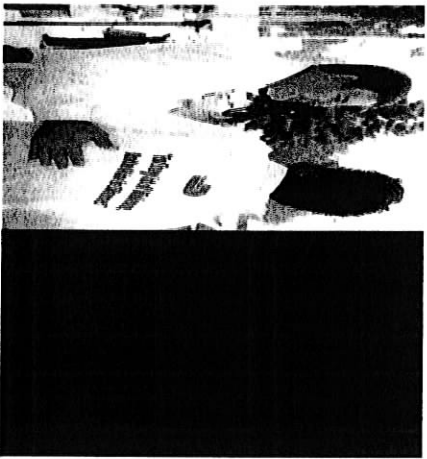
- Every Act of Violence Means Another Voice Is Silenced

UNYTE

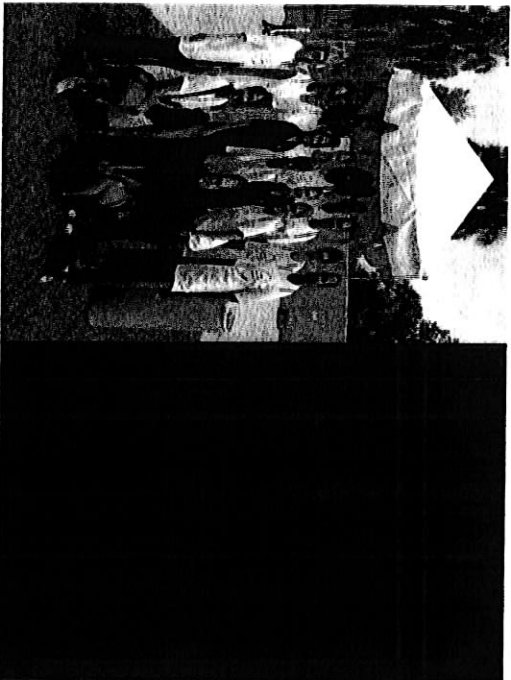
- *A new nation*
- *A youth nation*
- *A truth nation*
- *Unchain a movement*
- *Implement a change*
- *For youth today, tomorrow, and in the future*



UNITY

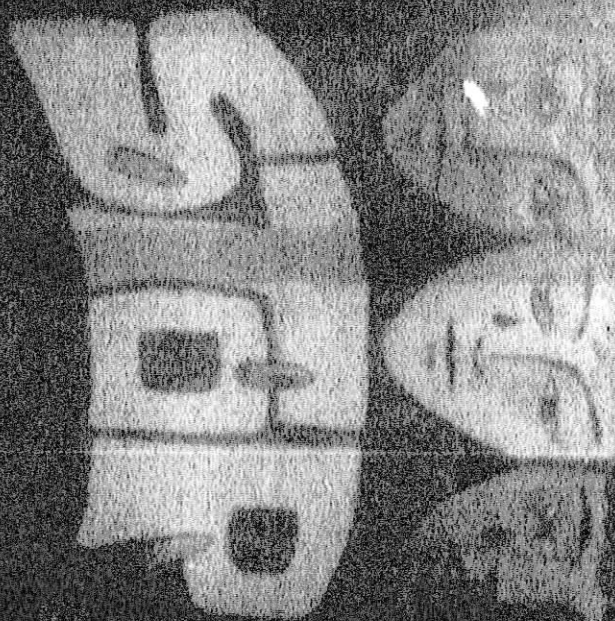


We
Need
Youth



Awareness Activism Access
Violence:
Let's Drop It
Let's Stop It
It Starts With Me

UNITE



MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT
275 NW 20th STREET, MIAMI, FL 33128
305-705-3600

CLINICAL COMPETENCIES

Wanda, W. Family Development Community Anti-Violence Program

Unified

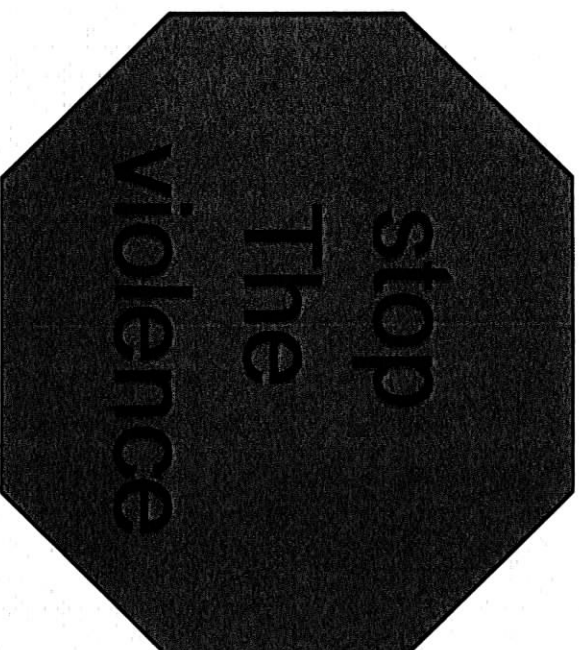
Non-Violent

Youth

Teaching

Empowerment

Miami-Dade Juvenile Services Department



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